SCREENING & INTERVIEWING
Opening Exercise

What are the skills and qualities of a good interviewer?
Learning Objectives: Interviewing

- Discuss the purposes of interviewing prospective volunteers
- Review Four Key Steps in interviewing
- Design relevant interview questions and review role of listening
- Propose options for handling problem situations during interviews
- Optional: Review policies and procedures for initiating Criminal Background Checks
Key Concepts of Interviewing

1. The primary purpose of interviewing volunteers is to:
   - Determine a mutual fit between the candidate and the Program
   - Screen for risks to the volunteer, the Program, and the athletes if the prospective volunteer is chosen.

2. There are Four Key Steps in the interview process: Preparation, Opening/greeting, Body, and Closing.
Key Concepts of Interviewing (continued)

3. Two essential skills in interviewing are:
   - Designing and asking questions based on an analysis of the position and required qualifications;
   - Reflective listening which assures that both individuals are hearing and understanding.

4. It is important to prepare for potential problems that might present themselves during the interview.
KEY Concept #1

1. The primary purpose of interviewing volunteers is to:

- Determine a mutual fit between the candidate and the Program
- Screen for risks to the volunteer, the Program, and the athletes if the prospective volunteer is chosen.
Importance of Screening Through Interviewing

- Athlete Safety
- Staff and volunteer morale
- Special Olympics reputation
KEY CONCEPT #2

There are Four Key Steps in the Interview Process:

• Preparation
• Opening/greeting
• Body
• Closing
Preparation

• Review all information about the applicant.
• Review pertinent information about previous work or volunteer experience.
• Use prepared questions to screen for suitability for the volunteer position.
• List the objectives you hope to accomplish through the interview.
• Schedule adequate time and arrange for a private, comfortable place to interview.
• Cast aside all distractions!!!
Opening/Greeting

- Put applicant at ease, establish a rapport.
- Clarify purpose of interview – to determine if there is a “mutual fit.”
- Establish appropriate time frame for interview.
Three Basic Sections of an Effective Interview

(1) Interviewer provides general information about Special Olympics, if the applicant is unfamiliar with the movement.

(2) Applicant shares information about him/herself in response to thoughtful questioning.

(3) Interviewer shares information on appropriate volunteer opportunities.
Closing an Interview

- Review and summarize interview
- Discuss next steps:
  - If mutual acceptance - discuss how volunteer can become active
  - If no match… encourage honest sharing & refer person to other agencies utilizing volunteers
- Express appreciation for his/her time
KEY CONCEPT # 3

Two essential skills in interviewing are:

(1) Designing and **asking questions** based on an analysis of the position and required qualifications; and

(2) **Reflective listening** which assures that both individuals are hearing and understanding.
Designing Interview Questions

- Volunteer job requirements
- Desired characteristics of a volunteer
- Questions to elicit the volunteer’s qualifications and motivation
- The three most important questions for the specific job description
Listening

Why is it so difficult to listen?
Skills of a Good Listener

- Listens to understand what is meant - not to get ready to reply, contradict, or refute.

- Listens to what is being said, but also pays attention to the tone of voice, the facial expressions, and overall behavior of the speaker.

- Observes speaker but is careful not to infer too quickly.

- Puts aside own views and opinions – One cannot listen to him/herself inwardly and at the same time listen outwardly to the speaker.
Skills of a Good Listener (continued)

- Does not prepare to answer while listening.
- Shows interest and alertness. This stimulates the speaker and improves performance.
- Does not interrupt. Asks questions in order to secure more information, not to trap the speaker or force him/her into a corner.
- Uses the technique of linking to build on what the interviewee has already said. This indicates to the interviewee that you are listening.
Key Concept #4

It is important to prepare for potential problems that might present themselves during the interview.
Potential Problems

- Very shy
- Unmotivated
- Attitude Problem
- Put off by having to “interview” for a volunteer position
- Wants position, not qualified
- Over confident
- Worried about working with people who have mental retardation
- Sympathetic verses empathetic
The Applicant Review Process

- Review the written application carefully.
- Call the references and keep a record of the reference contact and any pertinent information.
- Initiate a background check if necessary (and if allowed by the laws in your state, country or province)
Initiating a Criminal Background Check (Mandatory in US Programs only)

Initiate a criminal background check if:

- One is required by the State
- It is required by the Program screening policy
- More information about the individual’s background is needed